

RECKLESS RALPH'S

# DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

Published by Ralph F. Cummings, Box 75, Fisherville, Mass., U. S. A.

Price \$1.00 per year or ten cents a copy.

Ad. rates—2c per word, 50c per inch, Quarter page \$1.25, Half page \$2.00, Full page \$3.50. Four times for price of three.

Vol. 12

February 1944

No. 137

## THE BOY ACTOR, AUTHOR AND DRAMATIST

Master T. W. Hanshew

The subject of our sketch, Master T. W. Hanshew, was born of highly respectable parents, in Brooklyn, N. Y., January 3, 1857. At an early age he began his theatrical career under the late Mrs. F. B. Conway, as "Tom, the Call Boy." Evincing the possession of strong dramatic talent, interest was attracted toward him. His debut was a successful one. For some time he remained in the stock companies of the "Park" and "Brooklyn Theatre," appearing for the first time there in the spectacle of the "Naiad Queen." Progressing rapidly, he made his first appearance as a "star" at sixteen years of age, and at once created a favorable impression. Since then he has continued in this line, his repertoire consisting of the following plays by himself: "The Tiger Hunter," "Wrecked Life," "Will-o'-the Wisp," "Faithful Unto Death," "Out of the Grave," "Frozen Heart," "The Boy Thief," and "Tracked Down." Master Hanshew has also written the following serials: "Sundered Hearts," "Tom the Call Boy," "True as Steel," "Edith" etc., besides some forty short tales, and innumerable poems of various lengths. He is now associated in partnership with Mr. Rollin Howard, the author of "Shoo Fly," and is performing at all the principal theatres throughout the union, and making many friends wherever he goes. He is full of life and vivacity, tall and fairly built; dark-brown hair and blue eyes, and is still as boyish and full of mischief as when only "Tom, the Call Boy."

—The Boys of the World  
Vol. 11, No. 26, April 12, 1877

## GOLDEN HOURS

Reminiscences and Reflections

By Harry A. Weill

The title of this discourse can be construed literally, for the time passed with the favorite story paper of my boyhood days were veritably "Golden Hours." My review will cover the period from about 1890 to 1896, when subscription was discontinued, and having commenced at the tender age of 7, (too young, in fact, to even read correctly), with practically no data, only memory, to draw upon, ask indulgence for whatever inaccuracies or mis-statements may present themselves.

It may be fitting, at the outset, to take issue with those well-intentioned but misguided individuals who maintain that the perusal of so-called Dime Novels, (which is a mis-nomer, as the popular price was 5 cents) exercised a pernicious influence upon the young, on the contrary, they presented life in its most favorable aspects. Good, clean living was brought to the fore and the evils attendant upon wrongdoing were emphasized. Virtue was triumphant and vice vanquished. The hero always came out on top and the villain inevitably "got his"! Moreover, had unrealistic stories been printed, the juvenile mind is too immature to bestow a just appraisal to the moral issues involved. We were too much engrossed worrying from week to week how our hero could extricate himself from the trap which had been set for him by his enemies. There was the hero of Gold Dust Gulch, or the Ghost of the Dark Canyon, by Cornelius Shea, (circa 1892), compelled, at the end of a certain chapter to jump



from the cliff into the deep ravine, with certain death staring him in the face. With bated breath I waited for the following issue of G. H., to learn that a friend was standing upon a ledge higher up and threw a lasso which Fancy Frank caught in mid-air and was hauled back to safety! This mode of rescue was not deemed improbable by no less an author than Sir Conan Doyle, who, in one of his thrillers has Sherlock Holmes saved from the clutches of the arch fiend, Moriarty, by a similar device. Commentary: The Sherlock Holmes detective stories are regarded as masterpieces of literature, whereas Old King Brady, written in like vein, are discredited as trash. Why should this be?

It is further not too much to say that through association with Golden Hours I acquired an intimate knowledge of History, geography, science, discoveries and invention, which could not be gleaned from any other source and has stood me in good stead a lifetime. A cross-section of subjects which were incorporated in the serials of Golden Hours will reveal that they covered practically every field of human endeavor from the outset of recorded time until the time the paper ceased publication in 1911:

—PRE-COLONIAL: The Prince of the Montezumas, or the Temple of Houitoposhli, by John de Morgan. (This story was illustrated with pictures of ancient pottery, weapons, inscriptions found upon edifices, and the like). Ponce de Leon, or the Search for the Fountain of Youth, also by de Morgan, who it seems, had a penchant for delving into aboriginal research.

—COLONIAL (WARS): Captain of the Minute Men, by Harrie Irving Hancock, (not read, as it appeared in the earliest stages). King Phillip of Mount Hope, or the Grand Sachem of the Wampanoags, by John de Morgan. Fighting Hal, or From Fort Necessity to Quebec, also by de Morgan. The Young Privateersman, or the Adventures of the Rand Boys in the War of 1812, by Hancock. Dashing Tom Bexar, A Tale of the Mexican War, by de Morgan. (This was not a fictitious name, as the Bexar family is today represented in the Southwest, and there is a Bexar County in Texas.) Linden's Vow, a story of ante-bellum days in the South, by de Morgan, and Work and Win, a narrative of the

campaign in the Shenandoah Valley, in the Civil War, also by de Morgan.

The foregoing are titles selected at random, from memory. Subsequently there were stories dealing with the Spanish-American War and the Philippine insurrection, to say nothing of the outbreaks which occurred sporadically in other parts of the world; (Vide: Boer War), which, in view of the world devastating events which mankind is now undergoing can be considered as minor league. Mention should be made of the Chinese-Japanese War of 1894, (title forgotten), the sub-title of which was: Hal Barker's Chase Across Corea. The writer recalls what a thrill he got at the title being printed also in Chinese and Japanese.

A story was written having as its theme the Massacre of the Armenians by the Turks. Czarist Russia was represented by The American Exile, or the Adventures of Nat Gordon in the Land of the Czar, the leading character of which was August Emmons. Note the alliterative use of initials!

At this point I will depart from the history lesson to state that the writers of G. H. had a happy faculty—a gift—for alliteration, as witness: Van Vincent's Vow, by Shea. Runaway and Rover, by Weldon J. Cobb, Chris the Comedian, Frank the Free-Lance, Special Delivery Sam, Wild and Woolly (not descriptive of the Western section of our country, but the names of the heroes, Frank Wild and Tom Wooley), by Fred Thorpe. The humorous stories by Albert Stearns, who was the Fred Thorpe just alluded to and also "Fred," author of the Bones Series; of this more anon). Bolivar at Boarding School or Fun at Fossil Hall, the name of the master being Professor Frothingham Fossil. Mishaps of a Mischievous Moke, Hiram the Hayseed or Gambols of a Guileless Granger in Gotham, two characters of which who "took Hiram for a ride"—a phrase which assuredly was not current in those days—were Oliver Sudden and Wright Thayer, the situations in which they were introduced being "Johnnies on the Spot," being indicated by the play upon their names. Benton Rackets, or the Ups and Downs of an elevator boy—an apt title!

The editor of Golden Hours at that time was W. C. Dunn. While this may have been his real name, bears all the earmarks of being an adjuration to his



contributors to double their output.

The authors of G. H. were not only gifted with prescience to an unusual degree; they were positively clairvoyant. With what incredulity I regarded a machine (*The Boy in Black*, by Fred Thorpe, 1895), by gazing at which one could observe scenes the action of which was taking place thousands of miles away. This was the precursor of Television. At the conferences which have taken place among the United Nations it has been suggested that at the conclusion of hostilities passage be effected between the mainlands of North America and Siberia without having recourse to Behring Straights. Well, in the *Enchanted Diamond* or from Alaska to Asia on Horseback, Cornelius Shea foresaw this by many years. In the lapse of time the details of this story have escaped me, but the theme was of an underground secret passage beneath the Behring Sea, entry to which could be had only with a Diamond imbued with the magical powers of opening the passageway (a la *Open Sesame*), after which one could canter right through to his destination! In his day Albert Stearns never knew that the time would come when the airship would be a leading mode of conveyance, but in the *Silent City*, or the *Cruise of the Fata Morgana*, his characters pursued a mirage to the ends of the earth in search of a fortune which they finally found in a city which had been deserted for centuries. This was the modern airplane in embryo.

(To be continued)

### NEWSY NEWS

by Ralph F. Cummings

T. C. Harbaugh wrote "Third Women" in *Chicago Ledger* early in January 1907 under the pen name of Major Grant.

Just heard of the Tornado that stole nearly a whole collection of novels on Friday, Aug. 13th last, at 8:15 p.m. to be exact. Joseph Krajic says out of a fine collection that took him 25 years to collect was "Gone with the Wind" in 2 minutes. All he had left was 200 he picked up out of the street after the twister had passed. He said novels were scattered a whole block in all directions, torn, covered with black muddy water, and broken glass as it broke nearly every window in the house and others too, and tore off

the left corner of the roof, woodwork and all. We all feel very sorry for you, Joe, and will try and help you get a bigger and better collection than you had before.

Some very nice articles are appearing in newspapers nowadays, as follows: "Dime Novels are Exciting Tales," in *Lewiston Journal Mag.* Section, Lewiston, Maine, Dec. 24th. A two-page spread of pictures of Frank Reade and Jack Wright and Tom Edisons in Frank Reade Library, Happy Days and Good News in the rotogravure section of the *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, Dec. 5th, and "Dime Novels Did Read Secretly Get into Library at Last," in *Boston Sunday Post*, Boston, Mass., Nov. 21st, all 1943. All are fine. The *Boston Post* also has another writeup— "Novels Like Elinor Glyn's No Longer appeal to Lovelorn," came out Nov. 14, 1943. The writeup tells about Laura Jean Libby's and other Love Story Novels, also in the *Boston Post* for Jan. 16th, 1944. Reckless Ralph Loves His Dime Novels. (Who wants a copy of mine.)

Oh yes, "Ye Occasional Idler" No. 12 for 1944 has a fine write up on "Dime Novels and Yellow Backs." Send 10c to John J. Corell, pub., 295 Madison Ave., Room 3401, New York 17, N. Y. for a copy of his magazine with this writeup in it. A fine article.

Here's a woman who collects Deadwood Dick Novels. She has for a good many years. Gwen Lee was once a reader of these novels and this led her to become a collector. She is now supposed to have one of the best Deadwood Dick Novel collections in existence. (But where does she live, that's what we'd all like to know? Talbot Hatch sent in the clipping.)

Ellen M. Robbins, Librarian at Charlton, Mass. wrote to George French, telling him that she believed "Grizzly Adams," was the same that's mentioned in our novels, is buried in that town. He was a hunter in the far north and at one time exhibited Grizzly bears in Barnum's Circus.

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Irwin S. Cobb has been very sick. Hedda Hopper says that Mr. Cobb wrote her that "I can't afford to die because that would give me great personal inconvenience, then too, there's no ceiling on undertaking supplies." Irwin sure has a great sense of humor.

What's the matter with W. C. Miller?

Several of the members have written him, so have I, no reply. I sent a registered letter with card, it was returned with signature of Sophie Miller, so I'm waiting for a letter. I hope everything is OK with our Pard of San Antonio.

David C. Adams has been right down sick with the influenza, and is feeling much better than he did. He wants Liberty Boys of 76, also a book called "Noted Guerrillas," by Major Edwards 1877. Write "Dare Devil Dave" if you have any of his wants.

Talbot Hatch has also been sick, and has finely shook it off, is lots better now. Good Riddance, eh Pard.

Harry A. Weill has started a fine serial in the Roundup on "Golden Hours," its authors and information on G. H. Worth having a real gold mine of good stuff.

See the big ad of Ray Mengar's. He wanted the "Britannica Encyclopedia" in his last ad. No one answered, so he's decided to sell a bunch of novels, so he can get the B. E. himself.

Ray has a nice lot of novels offered, and I believe I'll send in a bid too, as it'll help around.

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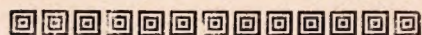
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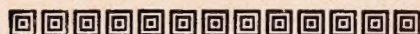


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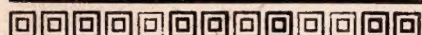
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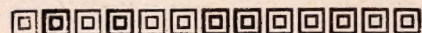
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